

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WELLS

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the
Year ended December 31st, 1942.

Wells, Somerset. June 16th 1943.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 1942, as compiled from the records of your late Medical Officer of Health (Dr. R. B. Manning)

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area: 57,175 Acres.

Population as supplied by the Registrar General: 10630.

Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books: 2,650.

Rateable Value: £37,692.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate: £153.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

GEOLOGY. - Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton Mendip and Westbury-sub-Mendip; Mountain Limestone at Priddy; Red Marl at Dinder; North Wootton and Rodney Stoke; Red Marl and River Gravel at Wookey; Lower Lias at West Pennard; Baltonsborough and Walton; Allubium and Peat at Glastonbury Moor; Meare and Godney.

OCCUPATION. - Chiefly Agricultural; Cheese and Cider Making; Dairy Farming; Paper Factories at Wookey and Wookey Hole; Stone Quarrying in various parts of the District. Some of the people at Butleigh and Walton work at Shoe, Leather and Skin Factories at Street and Glastonbury.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR

Births.

	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate.....	154	84	70
Illegitimate.....	7	2	5
	161	86	75

Birth Rate 15.15

Still Births. Total 7. Legitimate 7.

Deaths. Total 132. Male 60. Female 72. Death Rate 12.42.

Number of Women dying in or in consequence of Child Birth: Nil.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age: Total 8. Legitimate 7
Illegitimate 1.

Death Rate of Infants: All Infants per 1,000 live births, 51.95.

Premature birth and debility accounted for 2. Bronchitis 7.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) : 9.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) : Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) : Nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years) : Nil.

Deaths from Pneumonia (all ages) : 4.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE DURING THE YEAR

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total Cases</u> <u>Notified</u>	<u>Admitted to</u> <u>Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Scarlet Fever	11	11	Nil
Diphtheria	1	1	"
Measles	28	-	"
Puerperal pyrexia	3	-	"
Cerebro-spinal-meningitis	-	-	"
Pneumonia	1	-	4
Whooping Cough	2	-	Nil
Erysipelas	1	-	"
Enteric Fever	1	-	"

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality during the year.

<u>Age Periods.</u>	<u>New Cases</u>				<u>Deaths</u>			
	<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>		<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>	
	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
15 - 20 Years	1				1	1		
20 - 25 "	1	1						
25 - 30 "							1	
30 - 35 "		1						
35 - 40 "		1	1				1	

PUBLIC OFFICERS OF THE DISTRICT.

Medical Officer of Health (part time) : Dr. R. B. Manning, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (London).

Sanitary Inspector (whole time) : Stanley Merton Payne, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., Diploma of the Institute of Hygiene, R.S.I. Certificate as Inspector of Meat and other Foods, R.S.I. Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works.

CAUSES OF SICKNESS. There were no special causes of sickness.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING. District Nurses under Local Associations, and Health Visitors appointed by the County Council; the latter keep us informed as to the existence and removals of Tuberculous Cases, and other matters affecting the health of the district.

CLINICS. There is an Infant Welfare and Ante-Natal Centre in Wells, which is used by people residing in the Rural Area. School and Tuberculosis Clinics are provided by the County Council.

MIDWIVES. The Lists are kept by the County Medical Officer of Health to whom they report all births, and any abnormal circumstances which might arise therefrom.

HOSPITALS. Tuberculosis: These are provided by the County Council. Smallpox: This is also provided by the County Council. Maternity and Children: Wells Cottage Hospital.

SCARLET FEVER, DIPHTHERIA, ETC. There is the Joint Isolation Hospital at Shepton Mallet. The Wells Rural District coming within the served area, as the Council is a constituent Authority of the Shepton Mallet joint Isolation Committee, under an Order of the County Council dated January 5th 1932, which became operative April 1st 1932, and Hospital accommodation for the treatment of infectious disease, other than small-pox is provided at Shepton Mallet.

No Institution for un-married mothers, illegitimate children and homeless children exists in the District.

Ambulance facilities for the removal of infectious cases to the Isolation Hospital are provided. There is also an ambulance for the removal of cases to the Wells Cottage Hospital.

Attendance is made weekly by the County Tuberculosis Officer at Glastonbury, and a considerable number of patients from the Rural Area attend here. The homes of notified cases are visited by the Sanitary Inspector and myself, as well as by the County Health Visitors.

In the cases of Diphtheria and Cerebro-Spinal-Meningitis use is made of the County Bacteriological Laboratory, and Anti-Toxin is supplied by the District Council, when applied for by the Medical men practising in the District.

DISINFECTION. After infectious disease this is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector with the use of spraying apparatus, on the lines recommended by the County Medical Officer of Health. All disinfectants are supplied free by the Council.

LABORATORY WORK. The County Council have a laboratory at Taunton where samples are examined both bacteriologically and chemically and also for tubercle bacilli.

WATER SUPPLIES. There have been no alterations with regard to water supplies during the year.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL. There have been no alterations with regard to sewage disposal during the year.

HOUSING. There are no special features with regard to housing matters.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS. There have been no cases of the existence of bed bugs reported to us during the year, neither have any been found during the course of inspections. There has, therefore, been no action of any kind necessary.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council and dealt with by order:-

	No. of Cases.
Infectious dwellings: Occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients and disinfection....	12
Disinfectants supplied by the Council.	37
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by.. the Medical Officer of Health.	20
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, etc.	19
Dilapidated privies repaired or new ones built	7
Samples of drinking water sent to the County Laboratory for analysis.	31
Samples of milk sent for the tubercle test	27
Samples of Accredited and T.T. milk sent for the bacteria test.	232
Premises licensed under the Petroleum Acts for storage of petrol.	23
Premises licensed under the petroleum Acts for storage of carbide of calcium...	3
Bakehouses (6) Slaughterhouses (12) Inspected....	10
Public Schools inspected.	19

REFUSE COLLECTION

The bi-monthly collection of unburnable household refuse was discontinued in favour of a fortnightly collection of salvage of all types (paper, rags, bones, metal, bottles, batteries, etc.) The amount of refuse thus being reduced to very small proportions, collection of such will be made only as found necessary from time to time. (Usually quarterly)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT

There are registered in the District 16 factories, 95 workshops, 6 bakehouses, 12 slaughterhouses, 107 outworkers. These premises are kept under observation, and as a rule are kept clean.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Under the Livestock (Restriction on Slaughtering) Order 1940 all the slaughterhouses in the Rural area became automatically closed on January 12th 1940. With the exception of farmer's pigs (for their own consumption) and a few casualties no slaughtering has taken place at any of the slaughterhouses. Regular inspection has therefore, to a great extent, been unnecessary. Only a small quantity of meat has been condemned during the year.

FOOD INSPECTION

Inspection of food at shops and stores is carried out regularly and certain quantities condemned as found necessary.

MILK AND DAIRIES ORDERS

On the 31st December 1942 there were 469 persons' names on the Register of Producers of Milk.

Twenty-five of the Producers have licences for the Tuberculin Tested Milk, and 82 of them have licences for Accredited Milk. All these licences are issued by the County Council.

The number of distributors on the Register was 118, divided as follows:- Distributors only 11; Distributors who are also producers, 107.

The greater quantity of the milk is sold to one or other of the Dairy Companies or sent to the large towns, but in the summer a fair quantity of cheese is made, and a small quantity during the Winter.

During the year I have sent 27 samples of mixed milk to the County Laboratory for the tubercle test, and in all cases the milk was found to be free from tubercle bacilli. I have also sent 232 samples of T.T. and Accredited Milk to the County Laboratory, of these 80 were reported as not being satisfactory. In all cases, except one, subsequent samples proved satisfactory. This Producer has been suspended temporarily.

HOUSING

No new houses have been erected during the year either by the Council or by private enterprise.

Owing to the shortage of building materials and labour and to pressure of other duties, routine housing inspections have had to be discontinued; but complaints as to bad housing conditions and other necessary repairs observed during the course of other inspections are brought to the notice of the owners or agents for necessary attention,

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. R. G. MELROSE.

Medical Officer of Health.